

PRESS RELEASE



WHSmith, the National Literacy Trust and Puffin launch initiative to ‘Get Kids Reading with *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*’

WHSmith, the National Literacy Trust and Puffin, an imprint of Penguin Random House Children’s, are proud to have launched a ‘Get Kids Reading with *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*’ campaign to champion literacy, raise funds to get books into the hands of young readers who need them most, and help grow a generation of readers.

50p shall be given to the National Literacy Trust (charity number 1116260) for every copy of a *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* book sold by WHSmith Travel stores in the UK and Ireland between 12 June 2025 to 3 September 2025 up to a maximum of 60,000 copies.

Customers will also be able to donate money to the National Literacy Trust via www.literacytrust.org.uk/diary-of-a-wimpy-kid.

Funds raised by this initiative will support the National Literacy Trust’s mission to empower children and young people with the literacy skills they need to thrive, particularly in communities across the UK where low literacy levels are seriously impacting people’s lives. The campaign will also support the charity’s ongoing work in tackling the reading for pleasure crisis, with [new research from the National Literacy Trust](#) revealing only 1 in 3 (32.7%) children and young people aged 8 to 18 enjoy reading in their free time. Reading for enjoyment and daily reading have fallen to their lowest levels since the charity began tracking them twenty years ago.

Over nineteen books (and counting) in the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series, Jeff Kinney has catalogued the day-to-day life of Greg Heffley and his family with eagle-eyed observational humour, bringing his comic book experience to *Wimpy Kid*’s highly illustrated diary format to the delight of kids around the world. The books are 50% words, 50% comics and 100% hilarious! The series has now sold more than 300 million copies worldwide, in eighty-six editions and seventy languages. Parents, guardians, teachers, librarians, booksellers and children themselves repeatedly report that *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* has been transformative in a child’s reading for pleasure journey; through the books’ accessibility, unique humour and the relatability of unlikely hero Greg, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* delivers laughter at every page and keeps children reading. This year at the 2025 British Book Awards, book nineteen in the series, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Hot Mess*, won Children’s Fiction Book of the Year, with one of the judges commenting ‘Jeff Kinney creates readers.’

Launching ahead of the publication of *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Partypoooper*, book twenty in the series, this initiative builds on Jeff Kinney’s longstanding support of the National Literacy Trust. In recent years, Kinney has partnered with Libraries for Primaries, an initiative set up by Penguin Books and the National Literacy Trust, to address some of the key challenges facing reading for pleasure in schools where budget constraints often mean investing in school libraries is not an option. Kinney opened *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* supported libraries in schools in Blackpool and Merthyr Tydfil; creating engaging spaces that celebrate the joy of reading,

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connecting with young librarians, as well as offering large book donations for these growing library spaces. Kinney will continue his support of the National Literacy Trust as part of his upcoming November 2025 tour; the campaign will be a global party to celebrate the power of books with surprise visits from Jeff to National Literacy Trust partner schools and libraries in the UK, supporting the crucial role they play in championing children's books.

WHSmith operates more than 500 travel stores in airports, railway stations and hospitals across the UK. The retailer has a long legacy of championing children's literacy, having partnered with the National Literacy Trust for over two decades.

Jeff Kinney said: *'Getting kids excited and inspired by books – showing them that reading can be fun – has never been more important. We all know how a book can make a huge difference to a young reader – and in some cases, even change a life. That's why I'm thrilled that Diary of a Wimpy Kid is part of this initiative with WHSmith, helping to further the National Literacy Trust's mission to make access to books a reality for all.'*

Francesca Dow, MD of Penguin Random House Children's, said: *'With reading for pleasure in sharp decline, our mission at Puffin to publish a book for every child is more important than ever. We believe in the transformative power of reading, and we know that reading for pleasure is the single biggest factor in determining a child's success in life. The Diary of a Wimpy Kid series has had an unrivalled role in creating millions of readers around the world by showing children the fun that can be found in the pages of a book. As we approach the publication of the twentieth book in the series, I can think of no better way to recognise the extraordinary impact Wimpy Kid has had in creating readers over the years than by partnering with WHSmith and the National Literacy Trust to celebrate the joy of reading and get books into the hands of children who need them most, get them laughing, and build tomorrow's generation of readers.'*

National Literacy Trust chief executive Jonathan Douglas said: *'Jeff Kinney's much-loved books have inspired thousands of children to fall in love with reading, and this brilliant campaign will help to support our work so that even more children can gain from the many benefits that reading for enjoyment brings. By joining forces and working together to ignite a love of reading in schools and communities across the country we can grow a generation of readers.'*

Lucy Swinburn, Head of Books at WHSmith, said: *'At WHSmith we've always loved the Diary of a Wimpy Kid books, and we know our customers do too. Sharing that love of reading is at the heart of what we do, and thanks to the incredible support of our customers and communities, we've helped bring books to thousands of children across the UK who might otherwise miss out. But we know the work doesn't stop there. Literacy is a fundamental building block for a child's development and future, yet too many children still face barriers to accessing books. That's why we're proud to launch this latest campaign, renewing our commitment to book donations and fundraising. Our mission is simple: to help get books into the hands of children, giving them the chance to read, learn and thrive.'*

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For more information, please contact Ellen Grady, Senior Publicity Manager:
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Notes to Editors:

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About Puffin

Puffin is the biggest children's publisher globally, and is a loud, proud voice for the power of stories to spark imaginations.

In 2025, Puffin is celebrating 85 years of publishing children's books. Since publishing a series of non-fiction in 1940, Puffin has grown to become one of the world's most iconic children's entertainment brands. Publishing stories for children from 0–12, Puffin is home to famous authors, illustrators and children's brands, including Roald Dahl, Jacqueline Wilson, Malorie Blackman, Nathan Bryon & Dapo Adeola, Tom Fletcher, The Very Hungry Caterpillar, The Snowman and Diary of a Wimpy Kid. Many of these stories live beyond the book and have inspired TV, films, music and games.

Puffin is always on the look-out for new talent and is committed to giving children access to stories, through innovative formats and partnerships; ensuring that the magic of imagination passes from one generation to the next.

Puffin is an imprint of Penguin Random House, the world's number one publisher representing a vibrant community of publishing houses marked by unparalleled success.

Puffin: Stories to Spark Imaginations

For more information, please visit www.puffin.co.uk

Or follow us on: X/Facebook: @PuffinBooks | Instagram: @puffinbooksuk

About the National Literacy Trust

The National Literacy Trust is an independent charity that empowers children, young people and adults with the literacy skills they need to succeed. Reading, writing, speaking and listening skills give you the tools to get the most out of life, and the power to shape your future. For over 30 years the National Literacy Trust has continued to support schools, families and communities on a local and national level to help people change their stories.
www.literacytrust.org.uk

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About WHSmith

WHSmith is a leading global travel retailer in news, books and convenience for the world's travelling customer. With more than 1,700 stores across over 30 countries worldwide, WHSmith offers customers a wide range of books, newspapers and magazines, travel and digital accessories and food and drink. The retailer has a growing international business with over 600 stores primarily across the world's leading airports. This includes more than 300 stores in North America, the world's largest travel retail market.

About the author

Jeff Kinney is a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author and a six-time Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Award 'Favourite Book' winner for his Diary of a Wimpy Kid series. Jeff has been named one of *Time's* 100 Most Influential People in the World. He spent his childhood in the Washington, D.C. area and moved to New England in 1995. Jeff lives with his wife and two sons in Massachusetts, where they own a bookstore, An Unlikely Story. For more about Wimpy Kid visit wimpykid.com.